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# The Daily Star

SECOND EDITION

TODAY'S ISSUE 20 PAGES

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## BANSHKHALI CARNAGE

### An act of minority repression: AL

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Cig

The Banskhalhi bloodbath was carried out to terrorise and drive the minority people out of the country as part of the continued repression on them since the present government took office in 2001, the Awami League alleged.

A five-member parliamentary committee of the main opposition AL came up with the allegation after visiting

## HR group terms it premeditated

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Odhikar, a human rights organisation, yesterday released a report on Banskhalhi killings on the basis of its discussion with the relatives of the victims, local people and police.

The report termed the killings a planned attack instead of a case of robbery.

Quoting the relatives of the

# Hakaluki haor faces fishless future

## 32 species in danger because of pesticide, fertilizer use

PINAKI ROY, back from Hakaluki

The fabled Hakaluki haor in Sylhet is in danger of losing 32 fish species out of 107 because of overfishing fuelled by government leasing.

The conversion of parts of the haor lowlands into croplands every winter, indiscriminate use of pesticides and fertilizers and environmental degradation are contributing to a drop in the natural habitat and reduction in its fish population.

"The current dynamics is a serious threat to fish. Commercial farmers catch all fish, drying up the haor at the end of their lease period and killing all hopes of natural breeding," said Monjurul Hannan Khan, programme coordinator of the IUCN, the World Conservation Union.

About 72,000 maunds of fish were caught in 2000 in the haor, one of the biggest wetlands in



A fishing boat rests in twilight on the waters of Hakaluki Haor, a wetland once abundant with sweet-water fish in Sylhet, left. Fishermen carrying their catch from the haor, right, face an uncertain future due to fish depletion.



PHOTO: SYED ZAKIR HOSSAIN

## AHMADIA MOSQUE

### IGP pledges action against attackers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police will take action against the 'known mobsters' who attacked an Ahmadiya mosque in Dhaka recently after the tension stoked by the violence dies out, a top police officer said yesterday.

"We know for sure who are destroying communal harmony and who are instigating them. We'll take action after the situation calms down," said Shahidul Haque, inspector general of police (IGP).

"They (Ahmadias) have every right to observe their rituals and any obstruction to it goes against the law," the IGP told The Daily Star by telephone.

"We are providing them with security," he said, adding the local administration is keeping a constant contact with them.

Three attacks on the mosque at Nakhla Para in Tejgaon on Thursday and Friday shell-shocked the people of the sect who virtually kept them confined to their houses in the wake of the violence.

Police have recorded two cases

## Drive against faulty launch halts on owners' pressure

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The special drive against faulty and regulation-violating launches came to an abrupt halt allegedly because of the pressure from launch owners and influential quarters in the government.

With Eid-ul-Fitr couple of days away, launch operators were overloading vessels with home-bound passengers regardless of the government directive, and special drive leader Magistrate Munir Chowdhury was nowhere there to stop the unlawful practice.

He went on one week's leave

from yesterday, sources said.

Shipping Minister Akbar Hossain claimed Munir Chowdhury opted for leave to see his parents during the Eid, but sources close to the magistrate said he was actually sent on leave in the face of mounting pressure from the government high-ups persuaded by launch owners.

A section of launch owners became furious as a number of launches were either fined or impounded during the special drive that started since August this year.

Around 450 launches and cargo

## Actor Rajib's wife, son feared abducted

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The wife and son of actor Wasimul Bari Rajib went missing yesterday afternoon.

Police and the family of Rajib, also managing director of the Film Development Corporation, feared they might have been kidnapped.

Teams of Detective Branch, Rapid Action Team and police launched an extensive search for the two -- Ismat Ara Baby and Dip -- who went to seek visa from the Indian High Commission (HC) in Gulshan.

Ismat told one of her friends soon after leaving the HC at 1:30pm by cellphone that they were heading for Tejgaon by taxicab.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 4

## Mixed reaction to Badruddoza Chy's civil society platform plan

REAZ AHMAD and SHAKHAWAT LITON

The divulgence of a plan by former president Badruddoza Chy on Saturday to form a civil society platform has touched off mixed reactions across the political divide.

The mainstream opposition parties have welcomed the realisation of a governance failure of the BNP-led ruling alliance by none other than Chowdhury who was instrumental in bringing the BNP back to office in 2001.

But sceptics in the opposition camp suspect extra-constitutional forces may be pushing forward their hidden agenda under the cover of a civil society platform. They expect the former president would clarify his position on whether he represents a party or the civil society.

The ruling BNP says it is not

worried about what Chowdhury was up to as, according to it, opposition parties also are of the view that the civil society cannot resolve political problems, rather it is the political leadership that only can do the job.

Two days after his Ifar party where he revealed the plan, Chowdhury leaves for Bangkok today to see his son Mahi B Chowdhury's ailing father in-law Ataul Haque.

Chowdhury has directed his political aides to collect mailing addresses of all political parties, which he would need to initiate the planned dialogue after the Eid-ul-Fitr. Chowdhury is scheduled to return home on November 29, his family said.

Talking to The Daily Star on condition of anonymity, a senior BNP policymaker said, "We're not

## Three US troops killed in Iraq

REUTERS, Mosul, Iraq

Attackers killed two US soldiers yesterday as their car stood in traffic in the city of Mosul, and a roadside bomb killed another soldier north of Baghdad.

A spokesman for the 101st Airborne Division said its men were shot dead shortly after midday as they traveled from one military compound in the bustling northern city to another.

But several Iraqi witnesses said the soldiers were stabbed and had their throats slit. Television pictures showed large pools of blood on the asphalt.

Witnesses said locals stole items from the dead men's pockets, and smashed the windows of their white, four-wheel drive civilian car. One man was seen brandishing blood-stained Iraqi dinars he said were taken from the bodies.

"People were taking things from the car. I looked inside and saw two soldiers with blood all over them," said a local fireman who ran to the scene after hearing gunshots.

US troops quickly surrounded the area, in the crowded center of the Kurdish city, and interrogated bystanders.

SEE PAGE 11 COL 2

## Jubo Dal activist shot dead in Dhaka

### Sales officer strangled at office

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Unknown assailants gunned down a Jatiyatabadi Jubo Dal leader in front of Amtoli Mosque at Shajahanpur and a sales officer of a tea company was found dead in an apparent strangulation act in Dhaka yesterday.

As Hasanuzzaman Taj, 35, a ward leader of the Jubo Dal, reached near the mosque by rickshaw after iftar, the gang shot him point blank.

Taj, also a contractor of public works department, took a bullet on the left side of his head and collapsed to the ground.

He was rushed to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) where doctors pronounced him dead. The body was kept at the hospital for autopsy.

"Taj ate iftar with me at our house in South Shajahanpur before leaving for his house by rickshaw," said Sarwar Hossain Kajal, a friend of Taj.

Samsuzzaman, the father of the victim and a former sub-inspector of police, told newsmen at the DMCH that Taj went out of the house, saying he would return soon after realising Tk 30,000 from the

PWD office. Sales officer Mafijul Islam, 55, of Ispahani Tea Company, was strangled at his office in Motijheel commercial heart of the city.

Police retrieved his body from near a washroom at about 7:00pm and sent it to the DMCH for autopsy.

They said the body bore scars around the neck, suggesting strangulation. Police found a small piece of rope near it.

"Mafijul emerged from his seat at about 4:00pm for going to the washroom asking a local youth to look after the sales centre," police said, quoting the youth.

No money was missing from the cash drawer and police are yet to find the motive for the killing.

In another incident, a gang of locals shot and stabbed a young man near his house on Commissioner Road in Jurain in Shyampur last night as he protested teasing of his sisters by them.

Johnny, 18, is being treated for bullet and stab wounds in the waist and abdomen.

He alleged locals Shukur, Shikder and four others teased his two sisters after they moved to the area recently.



PHOTO: STAR

Homebound people scramble for a place on launches at Sadarghat in Dhaka yesterday, putting the vessels at the risk of being filled beyond capacity.

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**Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited**  
Share Department, Head Office, 40, Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka.

**Notice for (Adjourned) 20th Annual General Meeting**

This is to notify that the 20th Annual General Meeting (Adjourned) of the Islami Bank Bangladesh Limited will be held on **Friday, 12th December, 2003 at 10:00 a.m.** at 196, Motijheel C/A, Dhaka for the transaction of the following agenda.

**Agendum:** 1. Election of Directors

All the Honourable Members of the Bank are requested to attend the meeting in time.

Date : Dhaka  
24th November, 2003

By order of Board of Directors  
**Md. Shouquat Ali**  
Secretary

**N.B**

(a) The rules and regulations of election will be available at Registered Office of the Company / meeting place.

(b) The right of access into the meeting place are reserved for Shareholders / Attorneys / Proxys. Attendance of the Shareholders / Attorneys / Proxys will be recorded upto 11:00 a.m.

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